Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) A method of determining the invasivity of malignant disorders comprising measuring the expression of at least one gene selected from the group consisting of AXL, GAS, MMP14, ADAM12, ADAM17, MT3MMP, FGF2, FGF5, FYN, LYN, DDR2, TIMP1, HBEGF, SGF, S6KII, MAP4K4, SIRP.alpha., Annexin 2, Stat 5b and EDG2 wherein a high expression correlates with a high invasivity.

2. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, comprising measuring the expression of at least two genes selected from said group.

3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the malignant disorder is cancer, particularly selected from breast cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, glioblastomas and other cancers.

4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the malignant disorder is cancer, particularly selected from breast cancer, prostate cancer, kidney cancer, lung cancer, colon cancer, glioblastomas and other cancers.

5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 4, wherein the cancer is glioblastomas.

6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression is determined on the mRNA level.

7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 6, wherein the expression is determined on a nucleic acid array.

8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the expression is determined on the protein level.

9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 8, wherein the expression is determined by an immunoassay.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of reducing the invasivity of cancer cells in a subject in need thereof comprising administering to the subject an inhibitor of the AXL protein or AXL protein ligand, or any combination thereof, in an amount which is effective for reducing the invasivity of cancer cells, and wherein said inhibitor of the AXL protein is selected from the group consisting of anti-AXL antibodies or Fab, Fab', Fab2 or scFV antigen binding fragments thereof, and wherein said cancer cells are selected from the group consisting of breast cancer cells, prostate cancer cells, kidney cancer cells, glioblastoma cells or cancer cells of epithelial origin.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the AXL protein ligand is GAS6.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 comprising inhibiting the receptor tyrosine kinase activity of the AXL protein.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 comprising inhibiting the expression of the AXL gene.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38 comprising inhibiting the interaction between the AXL protein and its ligands.

15. (Canceled).

16. (Canceled).

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the cancer cells are glioblastoma cells.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the subject is a mammal.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein at least one of the AXL

protein inhibitor and the AXL protein ligand inhibitor is an antibody directed against the AXL protein.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the inhibitor is an antisense nucleic acid, a ribozyme or an RNA interference molecule directed against the AXL gene or a transcript thereof.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the inhibitor is a dominant-negative mutant of the AXL gene.

22. (Withdrawn) A pharmaceutical composition comprising as an active agent an inhibitor of the AXL gene, AXL ligand gene, AXL protein and/or AXL protein ligand together with pharmacologically active diluents, carriers and/or adjuvants.

23. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22, wherein the inhibitor is an antibody directed against the AXL protein.

24. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22, wherein the inhibitor is an antisense nucleic acid, a ribozyme or an RNA interference molecule directed against the AXL gene or a transcript thereof.

25. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22, wherein the inhibitor is a dominant-negative mutant of the AXL gene.

26. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22 for reducing the invasivity of malignant disorders.

27. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22 for reducing the metastasis formation in malignant disorders.

28. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 26, wherein the malignant disorder is glioblastomas.

29. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 22 comprising at least one further active agent.

30. (Withdrawn) The composition of claim 29, wherein the further active agent is a cytotoxic or cytostatic agent.

31. (Withdrawn) A method of identifying and/or characterizing an inhibitor of the invasivity of malignant disorders comprising determining, if a test compound is capable of inhibiting the AXL gene, AXL ligand gene, AXL protein and/or AXL protein ligand.

32. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31 comprising determining, if a test compound is capable of binding to the AXL protein and/or reducing the AXL gene expression.

33. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein a cell-based assay system is used.

34. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 31, wherein a cell-free assay system is used.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein the subject is a human.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, wherein said inhibitor of the AXL protein ligand is selected from the group consisting of Fab, Fab', or Fab2 fragments, and scFV fragments.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, further comprising inhibiting AXL gene expression by administering the inhibitor of the AXL gene or the inhibitor of the AXL ligand gene, or a combination thereof.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, further comprising inhibiting AXL protein activity or inhibiting the interaction between AXL protein and its ligand, or a combination thereof, by administering the inhibitor of the AXL protein or an inhibitor of the interaction between the AXL protein and GAS6, or a combination thereof.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 38, wherein the inhibitor of the AXL protein is an anti-AXL antibody and wherein the cancer cells are prostate cancer cells.